

# The American Record Guide

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## NOW IT IS C.&C. No. 3

**The World's Encyclopedia of Recorded Music: Supplement III**, by Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. London, Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd., 564 pp., \$25.

▲THIS volume arrived on deadline day, so that the following remarks cannot be in any sense exhaustive. On the other hand, those many collectors who own its predecessors will need to know only that it is available. They, especially, would sympathize with our disinclination to "review" so formidable a demonstration of scholarship. We are merely grateful.

Given a bit more time, errors doubtless could be exposed in profusion. But minor imperfections are inevitable in such a study, and they are of little consequence, anyway, in view of the extensive errata, corrigenda, and addenda that are among the valuable features of this continuing and ever more remarkable enterprise.

As indicated, that is to say, this tome was not meant to stand by itself. It is

but a continuation of the already twice-supplemented *World's Encyclopedia*. The parent book took so long to compile that it was bound with its *Supplement I* upon their joint appearance in 1952. Even in tandem, however, that \$17.50 proposition was as obsolete as it was irreplaceable as of the publication date. True, it listed virtually every electrical recording ever made through June of 1951, but by then the spawn of LP was bulking larger than the wildest fanatic would have predicted. Note that *Supplement II* (\$9.25) needed 262 pages to cover the eighteen months between July, 1951 and December, 1952.

Three more years, plus the first three months of 1956, are encompassed in this latest sequel. Additionally, Messrs. Clough and Cuming have decided to include pre-recorded tapes. We applaud the new feature—and take this opportunity to mention that THE AMERICAN RECORD GUIDE will be covering tapes itself beginning with the next issue.

Having made it clear that the book at hand is uniquely indispensable, it remains to be said that the lesson it teaches has been a guiding principle in these pages for

a long time now. In the preface to our 1956 "100 best" tabulation we commented on the frequency with which fourth, fourteenth, or twenty-fourth versions of a standard work had won critical approval. "In this day of myriad musical delights", to repeat ourselves, "it would be presumptuous of any critic to act as if he were his brother's keeper" as to which recording, if any, is *the one* to have. Sometimes such a presumption can be documented, and that is of course another matter. But it is not often the case.

Accordingly, if we may take this opportunity for another announcement, all reviews beginning with the next issue will include a recommendation for comparative listening with or without comment as appropriate. As a rule we will note only those two or three competitive recordings that have been deemed the most worthy. For the others, see *Schwann* or *The Long Player*. If you want to know about all of them, see Clough and Cuming. The less you care about vintage the less impelled you will be to comb four separate listings. But it's consoling to know that, in sum, they account for everything.—J.L.

## Haydn Early and Late



**HAYDN:** *Symphony No. 99 in E flat; Symphony No. 102 in B flat*. Vanguard VRS-491. *Symphony No. 100 in G ("Military"); Symphony No. 101 in D ("Clock")*. Vanguard VRS 492. *Symphony No. 103 in E flat ("Drum Roll"); Symphony No. 104 in D ("London")*. Vanguard VRS-493. \$4.98 each. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Mogens Woeldike.

**HAYDN:** *Symphony No. 33 in C; Symphony No. 46 in B*; Philharmonia Orchestra of Hamburg conducted by Arthur Winograd. M-G-M E-3436, \$3.98.

▲SCHERCHEN has set a precedent in the conducting of Haydn's late symphonies which may, by virtue of his probing spirit, become a yardstick for their interpretation. In his performances, he more often than not belies the assertion that music of the so-called Classic era is relatively straightforward, simple and easy—an assertion that suggests only superficial study. Scherchen, intellectually as well as emotionally, really probes the Haydn scores, which decidedly has more advantages than disadvantages in the unfolding of the composer's dramatic implications.

Mogens Woeldike, who has spent much of his life performing Classic and Baroque music, is less intense than Scherchen, more traditional in his stylistic assessments which, while hardly refuting dramatic implications, do not go far beneath the surface. Scherchen is more intent at

pointing up drama, as one discovers immediately in his performance of *Symphony No. 99* and subsequently in the other five works. Yet often he allows his intellectual curiosity to retard the dramatic movement, as in Haydn's arresting slow introductions to his opening movements. This is especially true in symphonies Nos. 99, 101, 102 and 103. Woeldike favors a rhythmically more fluent treatment of most of the minuets and the finales but Scherchen frequently proves himself the more masterful interpreter, as in the minuet of the *B flat Symphony*. The best of Woeldike's performances is No. 103, where his lighter baton technique lends more rhythmic grace to the ensuing drama than does Scherchen's more stolidly intellectual approach. Unfortunately, Woeldike's performance of No. 104 (the "London" Symphony) is not on a par with Scherchen's, whose appraisal of the profundity of Haydn's intentions is more arresting.

Reproductively, these Woeldike performances have their merits. The recording is an advance on the Scherchen issues, notably for the clearer woodwind reproduction and in some cases that of the strings. Both types of recording offend with too much bass reverberation, which is coarsening to the essential lucidity of the body of the strings in Classic music.

Arthur Winograd shows competence in his handling of two earlier symphonies of Haydn but little inclination to develop fully their opportunities. The *C major Symphony* is a transitional work of no little interest while the *B major*, which has more expressive resourcefulness, shows that Haydn did not give all of his heart in its predecessor—the *Symphony No. 45*

("Farewell"). Since a score is available of No. 46 only, one deduces that what may have prevented Winograd's performance of this work from rising above competence remains the same in both cases. In the case of No. 46, it is occasioned by miscalculation of tempi. Here, Haydn opens with a *Vivace* (there is no slow introduction) and ends with a *Presto e scherzando*; Winograd performs both on the slow side, while there is more "heart" implied than evidenced in the *Poco Adagio*, with its muted strings. The Hamburg Philharmonia doesn't have the smoothest of ensembles. Soundwise these works are excellently exploited. The disc is recommended to Haydn enthusiasts especially for No. 46, which belongs to a group of fine works that include the "Farewell", the "Maria Therese" and "La Passione".

—P.H.R.

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The American Record Guide

# Record Reviews

*THERE IS IN SOULS a sympathy with sounds, and as  
the mind is pitched the ear is pleased with melting  
airs or martial, brisk or grave; some chord in unison  
with what we hear is touched within us, and the heart  
replies.*

—William Cowper

**ALBENIZ:** *Suite Espanola*; Gonzalo Soriano (piano). Boston B-302, \$4.98.

▲THIS release is the only complete *Suite Espanola* currently available, and it is a highly satisfactory account of this colorful score. Immediately noticeable is Soriano's affinity for this style. Albéniz' music comes to life when beauty of tone and subtlety of phrasing and rhythm are stressed, and Soriano's performance seems to lack none of these essentials. He overcomes the technical problems of the music so naturally that one is hardly conscious of its difficulties. This ability leaves him free to express the scintillating rhythms and local colors of the score in a manner which I feel leaves very little to be desired. Whether or not he will prove to be equally effective in other departments of the piano literature remains to be seen. Suffice it to say, for the present, that he appears to have mastered this very specialized style to an unusual degree indeed. The recording is clear and well balanced. Compliments to Boston for an excellent disc. —D.H.M.

●  
**ARCHANGELSKY:** *The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*; Cathedral Choir of the Holy Virgin of Protection, New York City, conducted by Nicholas Afonsky. Westminster XWN-18247, \$3.98.

▲WESTMINSTER recently issued *The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom* in a jacket all but identical with this one, the same notes serving to introduce it, and the same choir and conductor listed as performers. There was, however, a difference, for that setting of the Liturgy was made up of sections composed by various distinguished Russians, while this, as noted above, is the work of one man. It is music of great and simple dignity, sombre in hue, yet not depressing. The choir does its best work on records to date; there is no sense that the singers are taxed or that they are straining for effect. —P.L.M.

●  
**J. C. BACH:** *Sinfonia in B flat minor*; **MOZART:** *Overture to "The Magic Flute"*; **BEETHOVEN:** *Egmont Overture*; **HUMPERDINCK:** *Overture to*

*"Hansel and Gretel"*; **SAINT-SAËNS:** *Rouet d'Omphale*; Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Willem Mengelberg. RCA Camden CAL-347, \$1.98.

▲SLOWLY but surely RCA is getting around to the reissue of its best old 78 material. Calculatedly or not, this omnibus appears simultaneously with a Columbia disc (ML-5154) on which one of these works (the *Rouet d'Omphale*) is performed (along with the other Saint-Saëns symphonic poems) by the same orchestra under its present musical director, Dimitri Mitropoulos. Thus the Philharmonic is placed in the unusual and perhaps the enviable position of competing with itself on different labels. The truth of this, of course, is that the Camden release is more a curio than not, and at the price it is worth having no matter the duplications involved. Primitive sound, perforce, but even after three decades these performances shine through any amount of sonic fog. Upcoming, let us hope, will be the Schumann *Violin Concerto* once so luminously performed by Menuhin with this orchestra under Barbirolli (a work unpopular with experts but entitled to make its way with the public). And of the considerable Mengelberg legacy remaining I am particularly anxious to see a reissue of *A Victory Ball* by Ernest Schelling—one of several pieces I can think of that deserve another chance now that their topical interest is no longer controlling. —J.L.

●  
**BACH:** *The Six Clavier Concerti After Vivaldi*; Sylvia Marlowe (harpsichord). Capitol P-8361, \$3.98.

▲HERE we have an example of Bach as an arranger. These concerti are originally for solo violin, except Op. 3, No. 7, which was for four violins. Bach has adapted them for clavier, and Miss Marlowe has supplied added harmonies where the texture is thin, as was the custom of performers in Bach's day. These performances are, I think, unusually good. Marlowe uses a large and very rich harpsichord with organ-like bass tones as well as delicate high registers. Her rhythm is usually quite strict, but always vibrant

and masculine. Her choice of registrations is remarkably varied considering the inherent limitations of the harpsichord. The music is divided into alternating *tutti* and solo passages, much like the *Brandenburg Concerti*, and Miss Marlowe takes full advantage of the different manuals of her instrument to realize this contrast. She plays these pieces as though she loves them; and well she might, for they impress this reviewer as being among Bach's most masterful works, well deserving of more popularity than is generally accorded them. The subtleties of harpsichord tone are difficult for the recording engineer to capture, but Capitol has done remarkably well. —D.H.M.

●  
**BALAKIREV:** *Symphony No. 1 in C*; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. Angel 35399, \$4.98 or \$3.48.

▲THE First Symphony of Mili Balakirev has virtually disappeared from the concert platform and, until this release, has not been generally available on records. Some years ago the Maharajah of Mysore commissioned a performance by the Philharmonia Orchestra under the direction of Herbert von Karajan. This performance had a limited circulation on imported Columbia 78's and later was transferred to LP in England. E.M.I. has wisely rerecorded the work, this time employing Sir Thomas Beecham, who is an old hand with this composer. Collectors treasure his brilliant and idiomatic reading of the same composer's *Thamar* that appeared some time ago. His performance of the Symphony is a thrilling experience.

Begun in the 1860's, the score was not completed until the late 1880's. Balakirev performed it at his last appearance as a conductor in 1888. There is no mistaking the nationality of the composer in any section of his long, brilliant piece. Typical orientalisms prevail, with characteristically vivid orchestrations. The Finale uses a Russian folk tune (No. 40 of Rimsky-Korsakov's collection of *One Hundred Russian Folk Songs*).

It is rather difficult to understand why this score has been so unjustly neglected by conductors. Balakirev, the co-founder (with Glinka) of the Russian nationalistic school, has received his praise in books and periodicals, but he seldom gets played in the concert hall. A few pianists attempt to play his oriental fantasy *Islamey*, but his orchestral scores are generally overlooked. Let us hope that this wonderful performance by Sir Thomas Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic will win for this composer a new audience. Victor Seroff wrote the notes that accompany the deluxe edition. The recorded sound is realistic, with splendid balance. —R.R.

●  
**BEETHOVEN:** *Grosse Fuge, Op. 133*; **MOZART:** *Serenade No. 6 in D. K. 239 ("Serenata Notturna")*; *Adagio and*

*Fugue in C minor, K. 546*; Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. Angel 35401, \$4.98 or \$3.48.

▲KLEMPERER'S latest record contains a varied program. His performance of the Beethoven *Grosse Fuge* has breadth and sweep. Instead of using Felix Weingartner's orchestral transcription, he plays the score as written, using 16 violins, 14 second violins, 16 violas, 10 cellos, and 8 double basses reinforcing the cellos. Some of the angularities disappear, and there is no denying the beautiful tone of the string section of the Philharmonia Orchestra. This piece is by no means as formidable in this garb as in its original setting.

The *Serenata Notturna* has been recorded many times but seldom with the sparkle and lightness that Klemperer brings to it. Manoug Parikian (violin), David Wise (second violin), Herbert Downes (viola) and James Edward Merritt (bass) form the concerto group. These members of the Philharmonia perform with characteristic brilliance and style. The supporting group also is splendid.

Mozart's great *Adagio and Fugue in C minor* provides a most satisfactory filler. It is a perfect complement to the *Grosse Fuge*. Here again we have full-bodied but not overly lush string tone. The spacious recording is well-balanced, with a natural sound.

—R.R.

●  
**BEETHOVEN:** *Sonata in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight"); Sonata in C, Op. 53 ("Waldstein")*; Vladimir Horowitz (piano). RCA Victor LM-2009, \$3.98.

▲THOSE who have previously heard Horowitz play the "Moonlight" are in for a shock. It has a "new look" (an odd phenomenon recently noticed by others as well as myself, is that Rubinstein begins to phrase, pedal, and generally play like Horowitz and the latter to sound far more like Rubinstein) and one that is better left to Chopin. The elected tempo of the first movement being too slow to sustain the lyric line, Horowitz indulges in some unorthodox phrasing containing frequent *rubati* and the Romantic liberty of taking a breath before each new phrase. Although the tempo of the third movement is correctly *presto agitato*, the same strange qualities of nuance and phrasing creep in. Also a tendency (*à la* Rubinstein) toward blurred pedaling in technical passages. This pervades, too, the first movement of the *Waldstein*. And then, suddenly, the beautiful singing quality with technical and tonal eloquence in the remaining movements are the Horowitz of old. The close-up microphoning and percussive sound piano sound do not enhance the album. On the review copy the terminal chords of the *Moonlight* are chopped off. Presumably they will not be missing on discs offered for sale.

—A.K.

**BEETHOVEN:** *Sonata in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight"); Sonata in C minor, Op. 13 ("Pathétique"); Sonata in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata")*; Egon Petri (piano). Westminster XWN-18255, \$3.98.

▲THERE are only a few pianists of the "grand manner" left, and Petri is certainly one of them. In a word, he attempts to make the piano sound like a full symphony orchestra. Petri's playing never becomes insensitive banging, but it stresses large masses of full sounds which give the music a sweeping and dramatic intensity. This style is quite appropriate, it seems to me, in the first movements of the *Pathétique* and *Appassionata* Sonatas. However, it is less successful in the final movement of the *Pathétique*, where a certain lightness and grace are called for. Sensitivity of tone, subtle nuance, and a beautifully controlled *pianissimo* are all nearly foreign to Petri's style. But it does have a grandeur and nobility which often raise the music to heights of excitement rarely encountered today; Petri has retained his technique to a remarkable degree for a man in his seventies! The recording seems to favor the bass, and my copy contained a disturbing amount of "shadow" from the preceding grooves.

—D.H.M.

●  
**BEETHOVEN:** *Sonata No. 30 in E, Op. 109; Sonata No. 31 in A flat, Op. 110*; Wilhelm Giesecking (piano). Angel 35363, \$4.98 or \$3.48.

▲WITH his last three sonatas, as in the *Ninth Symphony*, Beethoven reached the ultimate of conception and expansion within a given form. These are the interpretative pinnacles that pianists must climb. The technical problems are formidable as well. Those who have scaled the dizzying heights during a lifetime can be counted on the fingers of both hands with a few left to spare. Such a one was Giesecking. To be sure, there is one other who reached a deeper meaning, and at least one more with whom the revered German must share the same lofty plateau, but a Schnabel or a Backhaus are rare in any age. What problems Giesecking has are chiefly with technical clarity and pace of the *Prestissimo* of the *Op. 109* and the *Allegro molto* of *Op. 110*. The *Klagender Gesang (Arioso dolente)* and the echoing return in G minor (*Ermaltet Klagend*) are played with heart-rending sublimity. Rarely has the architecture of the fugue been so impressively projected. The sound is perfect.

—A.K.

**BEETHOVEN:** *Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67*; **MOZART:** *Symphony No. 41 in C, K. 551 ("Jupiter")*; Pro Musica Symphony of Vienna conducted by Jascha Horenstein. Vox PL-10030, \$4.98.

▲CONTINUED exposure to Horenstein strengthens earlier impressions. He is a

musician of sensitivity and subtle discrimination whose stylistic bents are toward performances of smaller frame than those generally encountered. Both conceptions here are played with intelligence. The Mozart has neither the hard-driven frenzy of Leinsdorf nor Fricsay's curious lack of definition. It strikes a rhythmically incise, easygoing happy medium. The last movement seems a little plodding to these ears, but not so much as to mar the balance. The Beethoven, again, is not the dramatic epic Toscanini makes of it, but more moderate in its coloration. Balance would have been better served with a larger string section. Efficient reproduction.

—A.K.

●  
**BIZET-DAUDET:** *L'Arlesienne* (complete drama, with complete incidental music); Mary Marquet, Berthe Bovy, Pierre Larquey, Hubert Noel, Maurice Chambreuil, others, and an unidentified chorus and orchestra conducted by Albert Wolff. London set LL-1489/90, 2 discs, \$9.96.

▲FOR those who have wondered how the much misused Bizet music is supposed to sound in context, here is the Daudet "*pièce en trois actes et cinq tableaux*" intact, with the atmospheric score unfolding as the composer meant it to. At least two members of this cast—Mlle. Bovy and M. Chambreuil, respectively the Renaude and Balthazar—are drawn from the Comédie-Française. Their collaborators seem to me equally in rapport with the special sensuality of the text, which evokes all the enchantment of that golden old Midi culture long since forgotten except by poets. Somehow, all the same, I was not as moved by this performance as I had expected to be. Being no authority on the French theater I cannot in conscience ascribe my lack of satisfaction to the actors and actresses, although one does not need an expert's credentials to discern that they hardly project the "supernatural emotion" inherent in the lines. And yet it is the music, mostly, that disappoints. We are all of us creatures of habit, I suppose, and a lifetime of hearing our best orchestras make vehicles of the *L'Arlesienne* suites has not prepared us for M. Wolff's understatement, as it were, of the original. What I am saying is that the two concert series are not to be compared with what this conductor gives us, which is a new experience altogether—and for all my lack of enthusiasm one not to be missed, I would add, by any admirer of the generally underrated and misunderstood Bizet.

—J.L.

●  
**BOCCHERINI:** *Symphony in A, Op. 37; Symphony in C minor*; Scarlatti Orchestra of Naples conducted by Franco Caracciolo. Angel 35384, \$4.98 or \$3.48.

▲TWO unpublished symphonies by Boccherini are set forth in stylish fashion here. Although these are not great scores, they

provide a further glimpse of one of the founders of the symphony. The *Symphony in C minor*, composed in 1788, was dedicated to "His Prussian Majesty" for Boccherini was in the service of Frederick Wilhelm II at the time even though he lived in Madrid. The *A major Symphony* (1787) is a completely charming score, with many clever touches in its orchestration. Each is performed to perfection by the orchestra under its regular conductor, and the recording is full-bodied and realistic. The hall has exceptional acoustics; there is plenty of resonance, yet the sound is even better than most of the fine Angel recordings.

—R.R.

**BORODIN:** *Symphony No. 1 in E Flat;*  
**RIMSKY-KORSAKOV:** *Capriccio Espagnole*; Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera. Angel 35346, \$4.98 or \$3.48.

▲THE *First Symphony*, composed between December, 1862 and early 1867, was given a trial run-through on March 7, 1868 under Balakirev's direction. The first public performance almost a year later, also under Balakirev, was quite successful. Liszt performed it with considerable success and other conductors followed suit. It is a pity that it has been overshadowed by the more familiar *Second Symphony*, for the *First* has many popular elements. The opening movement has several melodic themes that have immediate appeal, and the *Scherzo* has a savage, oriental flavor especially vivid in this wide-range recording. The other movements are no less attractive. For some reason, Angel has recorded the version of the score that Glazunov and Rimsky-Korsakov arranged. It differs from Borodin's own manuscript in many respects—melody, harmony, and orchestrations have been altered and single bars as well as whole passages have been cut. It is unfortunate that these bowdlerized versions have to be preserved in recorded form when the authentic text is available. About the performance itself, however, there can be nothing but praise. Alceo Galliera has the fire and energy required of this score, and the recording engineers have had a field day. An earlier recording of Karl Graunke and the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, also of the Glazunov-Rimsky-Korsakov version, is easily outclassed by the present release. The Symphony takes about a side and a quarter. As a filler, we have a spectacular version of Rimsky-Korsakov's show piece, *Capriccio Espagnole*. This has been recorded many times before, but seldom has the orchestra been of the calibre of the Philharmonia. The cadenzas are set forth in a stunning manner, and the total effect is overwhelming. The combination of sound and performance make this one of the most desirable versions of this oft-recorded piece.

—R.R.

**BRAHMS:** *Violin Concerto in D, Op. 77*; Leonid Kogan (violin) with the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra conducted by Charles Bruck. Angel 35412, \$4.98 or \$3.48.

▲KOGAN made a few recordings in Paris a year or so ago that met with critical approval. So that Angel has seen fit to issue his Brahms *Violin Concerto*, and wisely, for this is not just another version of the popular work. Indeed, it is close to being the definitive performance. Kogan has a big, full-bodied tone without being overblown, and he has a sense of refinement and elegance, yet there is a strength and force that is most appealing. Obviously he has a great career ahead of him, provided he sounds like this in person. Charles Bruck leads the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra in a moderately deliberate reading that has just enough dash and abandon in the last movement. The reproduction of the soloist is excellent and the balance is completely satisfactory.

—R.R.

**BRAHMS:** *Serenade No. 2 in A, Op. 15*; **SCHUMANN:** *Overture to "Die Braut von Messiana", Op. 100*; Philharmonia Orchestra of Hamburg conducted by Arthur Winograd. M-G-M E-3437, \$3.98.

▲THIS fascinating serenade, which Clara Schumann found "a wondrous flower and a joy", has yet to achieve the prominence so justly due it. Written entirely without violins, it is Brahms' only work for chamber orchestra. Winograd's sympathy for it, here played in the composer's 1875 revision, is without question. Although he conducts with the necessary flexibility and bounce, I find his approach rather chaste and lacking in depth and warmth. These qualities were best captured by Ormandy, who unfortunately plays only two movements in an album demonstrating the virtuoso qualities of his magnificent orchestra. Winograd is to be thanked for offering the hitherto unrecorded Schumann overture. He plays it with a flair for its dramatic content. The Brahms is in part marred by an oboist who produces the wheeziest, pinched (and at times flatly so) sound I have ever heard. The reproduction is on the soggy side. —A.K.

**BRAHMS:** *Sonata No. 1 in G, Op. 78*; *Sonata No. 2 in A, Op. 100*; Aaron Rosand (violin) and Eileen Flissler (piano). Vox PL-10090, \$4.98.

▲ALTHOUGH both artists display a fine understanding of the structures of these works, there is a bloodless, impersonal quality to their playing. Brahms imbued the *Op. 100* in particular with a smiling *Gemülichkeit* and a noble majesty in the final movement, but neither of these qualities is projected here. Rosand's tone lacks the silvery quality found in

others, and also a fluency in sustained piano passages. The keyboard tone is rather white throughout. Good reproduction.

—A.K.

**BRAHMS:** *Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68*; Symphony of the Air conducted by Igor Markevitch. Decca DL-9907, \$3.98.

▲WERE it not for certain reservations about the last movement, I could unequivocally say that this is the greatest Brahms *First* to be issued since Toscanini's very first recording of the work (the more recent LP issue by the same forces doesn't begin to equal the original) with the N.B.C. Symphony on 78's. From the earliest of the thumping C minor bass octaves, here taken more slowly than usually (as is the entire introduction) the listener feels that this is to be no ordinary reading. For sheer style and architectural grandeur, there is no performance on LP (Toscanini's included) to equal the opening three movements of this one. I find the third movement a shade slow, but this is a very minor matter compared to the overall results. In the fourth movement there is an angular quality about some of the transitional passages, particularly those involving tempi changes, and the entire conception is not the heady wine of the other three. Nevertheless, it is in fine style and equal to almost any other. The orchestra plays as it has not since the revered Italian's departure several years back. The sound is a model.

—A.K.

**BUXTEHUDE:** Chorale Preludes: *Der Tag, der ist so freudenreich*; *Mensch, willst du leben seliglich*; Chorale Fantasy: *Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ*; *Canzona in C*; *Prelude and Fugue in A Minor*; **BOEHM:** Chorale Partita: *Frew' dich sehr, O meine Seele*; Chorale Preludes: *Christ lag in Todesbanden*; *Allein Gott in der Hoch' sei Ehr'*; Luther Noss (organ). Overtone 12, \$4.98.

▲THE organ used here (Holtkamp Organ, Battell Chapel, Yale University) is a fairly large Baroque-type instrument composed primarily of flute and woodwind stops. Within this somewhat limited range of tone-color, it is capable of producing luscious sounds with a surprisingly rich variety of textures. This is a superb instrument—due greatly to the fact that it is a new one (1951) and therefore in excellent mechanical shape. The Buxtehude selections are somewhat less complex than Bach's masterpieces, but they have a purity and richness which is quite satisfying. Boehm was capable of combining the rather strict Baroque style with a stunning dramatic intensity worthy of the best of Bach's music. This is especially evident in *Allein Gott der Hoch' Ehr'*, which is as thrilling a piece of music as has been written in any era. Noss is not as free with rhythm as are many

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of his colleagues; but for this reason he is not guilty of forcing climaxes. They arise from the inner compulsion of the music itself, rather than from imposed mannerisms. The recording is clear and well-balanced, although the surfaces on my review copy are somewhat noisy.

—D.H.M.

**CABEZON:** *Deferencias Sobre El Canto Del Caballero*; **HANDEL:** *Organ Concerto No. 5 in F*; **BACH:** *O Mensch, Bewein' Dein' Sunde Gross*; *Prelude and Fugue in G*; **REGER:** *Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, Op. 129*; **WIDOR:** *Choral from Symphonie Romaine*; *Intermezzo from First Organ Symphony*; **DUPRE:** *Prelude and Fugue in B*; Clarence Watters (organ). Austin Organs, Inc. AO-LP 102, \$5.95.

▲THIS record was released primarily to demonstrate the merits of the Austin Organ at the Old Center Church in Hartford, Connecticut. And a very fine instrument it is, too; quite similar to those small but mellow Baroque organs in Europe which Schweitzer has championed for so many years. Strangely, the bass notes do not seem compatible with the tone of the rest of the instrument. The sound is clear throughout the middle and high ranges, while the pedal tones sound thick and quite muddy. Whether this is the fault of the organ itself, or the recording, is difficult to tell. I found the sound best with the bass almost completely off. Watters has previously established himself as a specialist in modern organ music, and in this instance he is especially fine with Dupré. In the Handel, I felt as though he were technically somewhat insecure; especially in the concluding *Gigue*, where notes seemed almost to fall over one another. The Reger and Widor selections are played quite well, however.

—D.H.M.

**CASELLA:** *La Giara—Suite Sinfonica*; **RESPIGHI:** *The Pines of Rome*; Orchestra of the Accademia di Santi Cecilia, Rome, conducted by Fernando Previtali. London LL-1575, \$3.98.

▲BALLETOMANES will welcome this first recording of the suite from Casella's 1924 ballet score. The concert version herewith comprises the opening and closing sections. The argument, after Pirandello, has to do with a huge and valuable jar (hence the title) in which a tinker traps himself after crawling within to effect some repairs. The owner then refuses to break open his treasure, whereupon the tinker settles himself and lights a pipeful. All ends well, of course, except for the *objet d'art*, which succumbs to the inevitable in the last scene. Casella's engaging and entirely characteristic score (Italianate neoclassic) includes a Sicilian folk song about a maid who is captured by pirates; tenor Felice Luzi handles it

with aplomb. Previtali's performance has everything to commend it, but he is unlucky in his competition as to the coupling. In my view Respighi's music is nothing if not virtuosic, and the Santa Cecilians for all their beauty of ensemble are no match for the NBC boys. Still, lyricism doesn't have to be surcharged in the Toscanini manner to make its point. The engineering is London's best. —J.L.

**CHOPIN:** *Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21*; **LISZT:** *Concerto No. 1 in E flat*; Leonard Pennario (piano) with the Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. Capitol P-8366, \$3.98.

▲IN both of these works Pennario displays almost every admirable quality. Unfortunately, they have been recorded by others who possess more—Rubinstein in the Liszt and Ashkenazy in the Chopin for example. To Pennario's credit, however, one must say that he is well versed in the art of subtle phrasing and dynamic nuance. His grasp of these works is clear, thorough, and forceful. Sturdy balance and sensitive support are supplied by Golschmann. The reproduction is skillfully engineered. —A.K.

**COWELL:** *Set of Five for Violin, Piano, and Percussion*; **HOVHANESS:** *Kirgiz Suite, Op. 95*; **IVES:** *Sonata No. 4 for Violin and Piano*; Anahid Ajemian (violin), Maro Ajemian (piano), Elden Bailey (percussion). M-G-M E-3454, \$3.98.

▲THE longest, and, I think, most interesting selection on this disc is the Cowell. The percussions used range from tom-toms to gongs, a xylophone, and various sizes of small drums. A few "tricks" of piano playing are used, also, much as in Cowell's experimental compositions for prepared piano. The music is much more, however, than mere poly-techniques. Instead of contrasting the instruments, Cowell seems intent on blending them into a consistent whole; a seemingly impossible procedure, considering the array of unusual and apparently incompatible sounds he has chosen. He does so, however, by imitating the sounds of one instrument on another. For instance, he imitates the drums on the lower register of the piano, thereby forming a bridge of tone-color with the percussion. In another instance, he imitates the xylophone with high piano and pizzicato violin. The total result is a remarkably colorful and ingenious fusion of seemingly incongruous bedfellows. The Ives *Sonata*, subtitled "Children's Day at A Camp Meeting", is full of the usual Ivesian humor and satire. Especially funny is the dissonant arrangement of "Shall We Gather At the River", with which the work ends. The Hovhaness is a very expressive and sensitively written composition with a strong oriental-flavored modality. Performances of the

**COPLAND:** *Appalachian Spring* (complete ballet); *Billy the Kid* (ballet suite); Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Columbia ML-5157, \$3.98.

▲THE Pulitzer Prize went to Copland in 1945 for *Appalachian Spring*, which was originally scored for small orchestra (1943-44) for Martha Graham's company. Later he drew a suite from the ballet and orchestrated it for full symphony. In 1954 Ormandy invited Miss Graham to restage the work. For the occasion Copland completed the orchestration of the rest of the work. Interpretatively, the present recording is a worthy successor to Koussevitzky's venerable performance (of the suite) dating from the forties. Ormandy exhibits a depth of understanding that the other phonographic interpreters seem to have missed. The overside *Billy the Kid* is not the same success story. Here the orchestral playing is far too suave and lush; after all, this is a rough and tumble frontier saga. Ormandy's conception lacks the abandon of Bernstein's. The latter's "gun battle" scene also is far more credible. Columbia's sound is superlative. —A.K.

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Cowell and Hovhaness works are excellent, while the Ives seems to me only fair. Recording is only slightly less than good.

—D.H.M.

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**The Exotic Music and Dance Music of Debussy**—*The Sunken Cathedral; Isle of Joy; Pagodas; The Moon Descends on the Ruins of the Temple; Port of Wine; Dance of Puck; Valse; Minuet; Sarabande; Passepied*; M-G-M E-3340; **The Evening Music and the Personality Music of Debussy**—*Evening in Granada; Moonlight; Sounds and Perfumes on the Evening Air; Fireworks; The Interrupted Serenade; Homage to the Honorable Pickwick, Esq.; Dr. Gradius Ad Parnassum; Homage to Rameau; General Lavine, Eccentric; The Little Shepherd; The Girl with the Flaxen Hair*; M-G-M E-3339; \$3.98 each disc. Johana Harris (piano).

▲THE situation sales gimmick ("Music for Tired Lovers" etc.) seems to have spread to the classical field. Note this categorizing of Debussy's works for piano as evening, dance, personality, exotic (isn't it all?), and, on a third disc not reviewed, water and nature music, each classification occupying one LP side. The intent, I presume, both for this and for the abandonment of the French titles, is to make Debussy more palatable to the "untutored masses". They will gain little understanding from these renditions for, in truth, the playing is consistently grey in tone and dull in character. Miss Harris' narrow approach is somewhat successful in *Pagodes* and *Clair de Lune*, and it suddenly comes to life in *Feux d'artifice*, but elsewhere her style lacks nuance, shading, brilliance and, most of all, insight. The engineering does not alleviate the tedium. —A.K.

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**DEBUSSY:** *Preludes, Book I*; Guiomar Novaes (piano). Vox PL-10180, \$4.98.

▲NOVAES' insight into the writings of the Impressionists is nothing new. Pictures of ethereal simplicity are painted in such as *La fille aux cheveux de lin* and *Des pas sur la neige*; colors of charming piquancy in *La Serenade Interrompue* and *Minstrels*. What I miss are the moments of whispered intimacy, for which the eminent Brazilian's tone is a bit strident. To my knowledge, there is only one edition of these pieces—that of Durand et Fils; this edition includes the final 10 bars of *Danseuses de Delphes* here omitted! Despite Novaes' intelligence, one cannot but wistfully remember the way of two sorcerers in the Impressionistic school: one now gone the way of all men (but happily his records survive) and another whose hands are no longer able to do his heart's bidding. —A.K.

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**DVORAK:** *Violin Concerto in A minor, Op. 53*; **RAVEL:** *Pièce en forme de*

*habanera; Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré; MILHAUD: Ipanema; Johanna Martzy (violin) with the RIAS Symphony Orchestra of Berlin conducted by Ferenc Fricsay (in the Concerto) and Jean Antonietti (piano)*. Decca DL-9858, \$3.98.

▲WITHIN the year Milstein will be recording this grand old warhorse for Capitol, reportedly, and perhaps that performance will be more sensibly coupled—I trust with the Goldmark, which he makes sound like a masterpiece. Studio schedules do go awry, however, and I do not hesitate as of now to recommend the Decca issue with no reservations whatever except as to the wasted overside space. Martzy is an artist to her fingertips, and she brings her every resource to the service of Dvorak's enormously difficult but violinistically most effective potpourri of folksy melodies. Nor does her performance suffer by comparison to Oistrakh's, which is less well recorded to say the least. Fricsay is a predictably able partner, and the late lamented RIAS ensemble collaborates with its wonted alacrity.

—J.L.

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**FOSS:** *Piano Concerto No. 2*; **WAXMAN:** *Sinfonia for Strings and Timpani*; Lukas Foss (piano) with the Los Angeles Festival Orchestra conducted by Franz Waxman. Decca DL-9889, \$3.98.

▲THE interest in the Foss *Concerto* lies mainly in rhythmic elements. It is a large and virtuosic composition in which the piano is treated as a percussive instrument. Although the interplay between piano and orchestra suggests a romantic conception, the harmonic language is biting and dissonant, and the total result is a highly charged dramatic quality which is really quite effective. Foss is a skillful pianist, too, with fingers that seem capable of almost any degree of speed or power. The piano sound seems better in the first and last movements than in the second, where it assumes a hollow, distant quality, as though this movement were recorded under somewhat different acoustical conditions. Although the Waxman *Sinfonia* is less complex music than the Foss, it is no less expressive. The slow movement is lyrically sustained, with even timpani beats underlying richly emotional chords in the strings. The other two movements utilize varied and independent rhythmic patterns in the percussion against the strings. Neither composition has much originality: there are shades of Bartók in the Foss, and of Shostakovich in the Waxman. However, these fine performances have withstood repeated hearings and continue to sustain interest. The recording is fair in the *Concerto*, excellent in the *Sinfonia*.

—D.H.M.

**GLUCK:** *Orphée et Eurydice*; Leopold Simoneau (Orphée), Suzanne Danco (Eurydice), Pierrette Alarie (L'Amour), Roger Blanchard Vocal Ensemble, Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Hans Rosbaud. Epic set SC-6019, 2 discs, \$9.96.

▲GLUCK'S *Orfeo*, which will attain its bicentenary in 1962, is generally designated as the oldest opera in the international repertory, though recent revivals of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* and *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* would seem to refute this. Still, the importance of Gluck's opera in its own day cannot be minimized. In it, for the first time in any opera, the *recitativo secco* was omitted, which did away with the accompanying cembalo. *Orfeo* was first given at Vienna with the original Italian text of Calzabigi. Twelve years later, Gluck revised his score for the Paris stage, considerably strengthening its orchestration and, among important new features, rewriting the part of *Orfeo* for a tenor. Originally, this part was written for an alto castrato, a species of singer which the Paris opera did not have at that time.

"It is an endless subject for debate," says Ernest Newman in his analysis of this opera (*More Stories of Famous Operas*, published by Alfred A. Knopf), "whether the part of *Orfeo* should be sung today by a female contralto or a tenor. The advocates of the latter course insist that the drama becomes more human when *Orfeo* is a man, and that the ear, as well as the eye, finds an opera with the three principal characters in it women a little monotonous. Besides, they say, did not Gluck's willingness to recast the part for a tenor show that he was not inseparably wedded to the idea of a contralto *Orfeo*?" Newman, like others, believes that Gluck conceived *Orfeo* in terms of contralto color. Therefore, to substitute the tenor color" is to alter the whole scheme of psychological as well as musical values."

Admitting the alteration of such values, I must confess that Gluck's *Orfeo*, for all its beauty of melody, does become more than a little monotonous with a contralto, backed up by two other females. However, gratifying as it is to hear a masculine voice in the role, it cannot be said that the high tessitura of Gluck's tenor is always gratifying to the ear. For all his artistic skill, Simoneau is frequently unable to conceal the difficulties a tenor encounters in striving to voice high tones securely and at the same time bring expressivity to every phrase. The familiar aria "I have lost my Euridice" loses something of its implied depth of feeling when hoisted up three full tones.

Despite the loss of certain values, there are just psychological reasons for the French presenting *Orfeo* through the long years with a tenor in place of a contralto. We live in a modern world where such neuter creatures as the castrato singers no

longer exist. To tolerate or endorse a contralto for artistic sake more often than not has taxed our mental resources and circumvented our complete enjoyment of this opera. The buxom build of most of the ladies of the writer's memory provoked an unwished-for mental rebellion (I was not fortunate enough to have heard the lovely Kathleen Ferrier who, I am told, sustained one's illusion of a callow youth).

For years, then, I have looked forward to hearing a production of *Orfeo* with a tenor. Now that I have heard one I find my feelings divided. Simoneau has the youthful quality of voice for the role and he sings for the most part convincingly. Suzanne Danco, as Euridice, is quite lovely in sound if a bit self-effacing in the gentility of her art. Pierrette Alarie sings well as Amor and the chorus acquires itself creditably. Rosbaud is quite competent as an accompanying conductor but anyone who owns the Toscanini version of the second act will discover the difference between inspiration and competence. The recording as such is excellent. —P.H.R.

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**GRANADOS:** *Allegro de Concierto*; **Mozart:** *Fantasia in D minor, K. 397*; **DEBUSSY:** *Clair de Lune*; **SCHUBERT:** *Moment musicaux, Nos. 3 in F, 4 in C sharp minor, Op. 94*; **LAZAR:** *Marche funèbre* (from piano sonata); **CHOPIN:** *Heroique Polonaise in A flat, Op. 53*; José Iturbi (piano). Angel 35347, \$4.98 or \$3.48.

▲HAVING inherited a flair for music of Hispanic origin, Iturbi's greatest success here, understandably, is with this literature. The command and authority as well as the rich coloration and flavor are impressive. Also well played (if a little dryly) are the two *Moments musicaux* of Schubert, and the movement from the sonata by Lazar. The ever-present and often distorted excerpt from Debussy's *Suite Bergamasque* is given a totally unfeeling rendition of a slickness worthy of Iturbi's days in Hollywood situation comedies. The Mozart is wanting in insight, and the Chopin, although finely articulated, lacks the grandeur found elsewhere. All are favorably treated by the microphone. —A.K.

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**HINDEMITH:** *Mathis der Maler*; **TOCH:** *Symphony No. 3*; Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. Capitol P-8364, \$3.98.

▲THE feature attraction here is the Toch Symphony. Hindemith is one of those rare composers who says about the last word on his own works, and his performance of *Mathis* (Decca DL-9818) is still unapproached despite the thoroughly musical exposition at hand. One really is unaware of the many subtleties possible in Hindemith's music until one hears the conductor perform his works.

Ernst Toch, a Viennese by birth, was a leading figure between the two world wars in the musical life of Germany. In the late 1930s he came here from the Hitler-dominated country and soon became identified with pedagogy. As a composer, he has been undeservedly neglected. His style is often described as Classical-Romantic. Of his earlier chamber works which I have heard, the prevailing motivation would seem to me the Classical tradition. The motto of his *Third Symphony* is taken from Goethe's *Werther*: "Certainly I am but a wanderer on the earth, a pilgrim—are you anything more?" To me this suggests emotional disturbance and uncertainty. The uncertainty was proved by Toch's many changes in his original work (which won a Pulitzer Prize in 1956) even while this recording was being prepared for recording. The disturbances are ever present; frequently the mood is distraught. The work fascinates in some ways for its novel-sounding orchestration, which might lead some listeners to believe that Toch was concerned primarily with sound rather than substance. A second hearing dismissed that thought from my mind but I do not feel that I have fully grasped the composer's intentions yet. The printed score, which will be published in study size by Mills, may solve the matter for one who, like myself, enjoys a mental grasp of, as well as an emotional response to, all music. Excellent recording in both works. —P.H.R.

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**KILLMAYER:** *Missa Brevis*; **HARRISON:** *Mass*; New York Concert Choir and orchestra conducted by Margaret Hillis. Epic LC-3307, \$3.98.

▲THE German Wilhelm Killmayer is a pupil of Carl Orff. The influence is evidenced in this dissonant, sharply rhythmic *a cappella* Mass. The composition is a piece of sheer virtuosity both for the composer and for the performing choir. One feels that the composer has used the ageless text as the occasion for his virtuosity rather than for the inspiration he might find in it. Although titled *Missa Brevis* and living up to the title in its imitation to *Kyrie*, *Gloria* and *Agnus Dei*, the Mass is not really so short, for each movement is worked out to considerable length. In contrast, Lou Harrison's Mass is conceived in a more melodic vein; the instruments are used to sustain his lines. The first version of the work was inspired by the singing of the Indians in Spanish California and Mexico, a kind of plainsong accompanied by percussion instruments. Both Masses are well performed.

These two works were sponsored by the Fromm Foundation, whose aim is to give awards for existing compositions, to commission new ones, and to see to the problems of publication, performance and recording. —P.L.M.

**KIRCHNER:** *Trio for Violin, Cello and Piano*; *Sonata Concertante for Violin and Piano*; Nathan Rubin and Eudice Shapiro (violins), George Neikrug ('cello), and Leon Kirchner (piano). Epic LC-3306, \$3.98.

▲THESE compositions, with their extreme dissonances and rhythmic complexities, probably will mystify most listeners on first hearing. However, stick to it—there's meat here! Kirchner is a composer of enormous technical capabilities and, I think, expressive powers to match. One can easily detect the influence of Schoenberg and Sessions; nevertheless, Kirchner is not merely aping his teachers. The music has an originality of dramatic effect and a sense of psychological form which are quite compelling. Moreover, Kirchner's somewhat obscure harmonic language and constantly changing patterns seem to make sense after repeated hearings. Also, the composer is a pianist of no mean abilities, judging from the present disc, and the others participate with considerable interpretative understanding. Violinist Shapiro is especially fine in the *Sonata*. We hope to welcome many more items from Epic's Twentieth Century Composer's Series. Would that all will be as excellent in music, performance, and recording, as is this issue. —D.H.M.

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**LISZT:** *Piano Concerto No. 1 in E flat*; *Piano Concerto No. 2 in A*; Andor Foldes with Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Leopold Ludwig. Decca DL-9888, \$3.98.

▲OF course Liszt's *E flat Concerto* is in part a virtuosic work, but there is some poetry in it also, though not as much as in the *A major Concerto*. Foldes and Ludwig treat both these works as virtuosic ones, completely objective and somewhat unfeelingly. To be sure, the pianist can be praised for not sentimentalizing and for his meaningful treatment of some of the more poetic passages of the *A major*, but on the whole he and Ludwig fail in either case to achieve a performance that is in a class with the best that came before them. For a coupling of both works, try the Farnardi-Scherchen performances (Westminster 18272), or the Kempff-Fistoulari ones (London LL-1072). Both Gilels and Rubinstein do justice to the first, and Casadesus to the second. Impressive sound here. —P.H.R.

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**LISZT:** *Piano Concerto No. 1 in E Flat*; **GRIEG:** *Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16*; Richard Farrell (piano) with the Hallé Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. Mercury MG-50126, \$3.98.

▲HERE is a coupling of two real chestnuts, but the performances are far from being hackneyed. To begin with, I have never heard these works performed at a more leisurely pace; so slow, in fact, that at times the Liszt stops dead in its tracks.

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Farrell is the kind of pianist who believes in caressing each note, and his playing is a study in variety of tone color and shading. There are times, however, when I feel he exceeds the bounds of good taste and reads into the music things which probably were not intended by the composer. If you feel that you have heard these works often enough to grow tired of them, then you may find these off-beat interpretations just what the doctor ordered. One thing is certain—you will not be bored, for every measure has some interesting and unusual idea. Weldon seems in complete agreement with Farrell's conception, and the result is an unusual example of artistic teamwork. Many will think that Rubinstein owns these works, and his new recordings of them are wonderful both artistically and technically. The sound here is excellent.

—D.H.M.

**MAHLER:** *Symphony No. 4 in G*; The Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem Van Otterloo; Theresa Stich-Randall (soprano). Epic LC-3304, \$3.98.

▲THIS is the second recording of the *Fourth* by the excellent musicians of Holland, the first having come from the Amsterdam Concertgebouw under Van Beinum (London). In regard to interpretation, it is the opinion of this reviewer that Van Beinum's is still unchallenged, and is indeed the finest Mahler *Fourth* he has yet heard. The symphony was originally planned in six movements, under the title *Humoresken*, the opening *Allegro* of which has remained intact under the final four-movement scheme. This movement enters a strange new realm in the key of G major. Its fantastically humorous conception, from the opening jingle of sleigh-bells to the satiric final *crescendo*, is best realized by Van Beinum, who maintains a swifter pace and lighter texture throughout. Van Otterloo, like Bruno Walter, is more plodding, and some of the humor is consequently dampened.

The *Scherzo*, in C minor, anticipates some of the wild diabolism of the later Mahler symphonies. Here again Van Beinum is a little fleeter. The *Adagio*, like that of Beethoven's *Ninth*, is a double set of slow variations with a main section of great beauty and spiritual calm. In this movement's closing pages occurs a modulatory effect which Walter Piston described as "magical"—a quality best exemplified in Van Beinum's exquisite handling.

The gay strophic song *Life in Heaven*, which functions as the last movement, was composed in 1892, six years before the rest of the symphony. This brief song actually furnishes much thematic material for the *Third Symphony* as well as the *Fourth*, combining them into a sort of cyclic entity. In the sopranos Margaret Ritchie (London) and Theresa Stich-Randall we have two quite different, but

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excellent and valid approaches to this movement. There is in Ritchie's interpretation a harsh and peculiar quality which seems in character, and an obviously deep understanding and empathy. Stich-Randall, equally abjuring conventional prettiness, gives a coolly luminous performance in the new version. Her pure tones, exactly on pitch, clarify the fantastic melodic contour of her part, underlining its utter originality as if we were hearing it and wondering at it for the first time.

Both the London and Epic recordings are of the highest quality and sympathetic to the contrapuntal complexity of the music. Each excels in certain significant details denied to the other. The sleigh-bells that characterize this magical G-major world, unique in Mahler's output, achieve for the first time their full effect under Epic's engineers. The excellent first oboe of the Hague Philharmonic sings an expressive lament in the *Adagio* that is captured with ravishing beauty. The brass (without trombones in this symphony!) is exceptionally fine. Lacking in the new version is the clear definition of the harp part that distinguished the London recording. Not only does the important rhythmic *ostinato* of the low harp introduce the final stanza of the song, but the last four notes of the symphony are actually given to this instru-

ment, unaccompanied, and it is obviously intolerable that it should here be relegated to its usual vague "background" function.

The much older Columbia recording under Walter, whatever its documentary value, has the grave fault of considerable murkiness and distortion, and the soprano (Desi Halban) is occasionally inaudible. And incidentally, the last two movements should not, as they are on these records, be separated by long pauses and dividing bands. For the final chord of the *Adagio* (dominant chord of G) is really an upbeat for the Finale.

—Jack Diether

**MENDELSSOHN:** *Songs Without Words* (complete); Ania Dorfmann (piano). Victor set LM-6128, 3 discs, \$11.94.

▲EVERY one of these forty-eight little pieces for the piano is a gem. Each is unique in its expressive intent, and each is perfect in form. Isolated selections such as the *Spring Song* and *Contemplation* have been hackneyed to death, but in their original forms they are completely bewitching. Victor has chosen an artist in Miss Dorfmann who is sufficiently endowed to make this set a truly memorable listening experience. It is difficult to tell which of these compositions she plays the best. She lacks very little in technique, but the difficulties here far supersede the technical. Many, such as *Sweet*

*Remembrance*, *Lullaby*, and *Duet*, to name only a few, are studies in the control of singing tone and exquisite phrasing. Others (*The Brook*, *Spinning Song*), stress lightness of touch as fast tempi. But even this analysis is too superficial, for there is that elusive matter of purity of style, reserved only for great artists. I feel that Miss Dorfmann is, indeed, such an artist if what she displays on these discs is of her usual quality. The recording is excellent except that I seem to detect a soft but almost ever-present "thump" as she plays, which could be one of a number of things: a defective pedal, her foot, etc. At any rate, it is not disturbing enough to detract from the fact that this is an outstanding addition to recorded piano literature.

—D.H.M.

**MOZART:** *Die Entfuehrung aus dem Serail*—*Martens aller Arten*; *Welcher Kummer herrscht in meiner Seele*; *Noze di Figaro*—*Non so piu cosa son*; *Voi che sapete*; *Die Zauberfloete*—*Ach, ich fuehl's*; *Alma grande e nobil core*, K. 578; *Un moto di gioia*, K. 579; *A questo seno*, K. 374; *Misera, dove son*, K. 349; Maria Stader (soprano) with the RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay and the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Ludwig and Fritz Lehmann. Decca DL-9872, \$3.98.

▲STADER'S performances of the *Entfuehrung* and *Zauberfloete* arias are, of course, familiar as parts of the complete recordings of those operas. There is little need to add to the praise these performances have already earned. The two Cherubino arias from *Figaro* are somewhat less satisfying; in *Non so piu* the soprano seems a bit too serious, and in *Voi che sapete* there is an unaccustomed quaver in her voice. The concert arias are beautifully sung, their technical problems solved with apparent ease. They are not all top-flight Mozart, but they are characteristic and they have charm. *Un moto di gioia*, composed to be interpolated into *Figaro*, is quite delightful. The seemingly endless phrases of *A questo seno* are a real test for the singer, but she meets it triumphantly.

—P.L.M.

**MOZART:** *Clarinet Concerto in A*, K. 622; *Clarinet Quintet in A*, K. 581; Benny Goodman (clarinet) with the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch (in the Concerto) and with the Boston Symphony String Quartet (in the Quintet). Victor LM-2073, \$3.98.

▲THIS is the third version by Benny Goodman of the *Clarinet Quintet*. He made it with the Budapesters on '78's before the war and again with the American Arts Quartet (on Columbia ML-4483). The new version, with the Boston Symphony String Quartet, is by all odds the best he has made, for it has a polish and *élan*

sometimes lacking in the earlier performances. The quartet, made up of members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, gives him ideal support.

The *Concerto*, in contrast, receives a rather stodgy performance. The conducting is slow and perfunctory, and the sound does not have the brightness and crispness one usually associates with the Boston Symphony recordings. This performance, like the *Quintet*, was recorded at the Berkshire Festival, Tanglewood, Mass., last summer, shortly after Goodman made his debut with the Boston Symphony. It is a pity that the *Concerto* may not be wholeheartedly recommended, for the coupling is ideal, having the two major clarinet works by Mozart on one record without serious sound deterioration towards the center. Goodman's own performances, however, may be recommended without hesitation.

—R.R.

**ORFF:** *Carmina Burana*; Agnes Giebel (soprano); Marcel Cordes (basso); Paul Kuen (tenor); West German Radio Chorus; Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Wolfgang Sawallisch; all under the personal supervision of Carl Orff. Angel 35415, \$4.98 or \$3.48.

▲IT is safe to say that with the issue of the Decca recording of *Carmina Burana* late in 1953 Carl Orff's name became a household word in this country. We have since had opportunities to get to know him better, but it is doubtful that the impact of the first hearing of the *Burana* can ever be repeated. Orff's much vaunted use of strong rhythmic patterns, his substitution of repetition for development, prove in the long run to be confining. Coming back to the *Carmina Burana* in a more subtle, more polished, and more brilliantly recorded version, I still find the work exhilarating, and in the voice of Agnes Giebel at least one solo passage is hauntingly lovely. For anyone who has not yet found Orff's masterpiece, then, this version is heartily recommended. It is noteworthy that Paul Kuen is the tenor in both recordings.

—P.L.M.

**ROGERS:** *Leaves From the Tales of Pinocchio*; **HANSON:** *Fantasy on a Theme of Youth*; **TRIGGS:** *The Bright Land*; Marjorie True Love MacKown (narrator) with the Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. Mercury MG-50114, \$3.98.

▲THE Rogers score is a witty, charming and very clever little phantasy. However, the dedication, "To All Bad Boys—and Girls", seems to underline what is to me a basic weakness here; it is probably a bit too musically sophisticated to appeal to children. The style is surprisingly dissonant considering the subject matter;

it is an attempt to paint pictures and create moods by using the orchestra as a source of sound effects. How much more wise, it seems to me, was Prokofiev, in *Peter and the Wolf*, when he used a much simpler style and a catchy tune for each character in the story! There, children have something to hang on to, musically, whereas there is very little in *Pinocchio* which is readily memorable. The narrator, although a fine reader, adds to the sophisticated air of the composition by doing her part in rather straight-laced fashion. The Hanson *Fantasy* is a very emotional and very diatonic composition which will probably surprise you because it does not have that Nordic flavor usually associated with his output. The style is close to being Hollywoodish, in the best sense of that term. Triggs' *Bright Land* is intended by the composer to be a musical portrait of his native Colorado. We may safely assume that he is in love with his home state, as the music is very sweet in its luminous, majorish feeling. The performances on this disc are of the high quality we have come to expect from Hanson's baton, and the recording is exemplary.

—D.H.M.

**SCHUBERT:** *Quartet No. 14 in D minor ("Death and the Maiden")*; Hollywood String Quartet. Capitol P-8359, \$3.98.

▲OF all the extant versions this latest is the most skillfully recorded. It may be, as well, the most skillfully performed in terms of execution and conscientiousness *per se*. But the needed Schubertian felicity is in short supply all the same. Instead of a song we hear an aria, so to speak; everything is beautifully toolled and oh, so artful. Not really, when you come right down to it, for this is emotional music and emotion seems to me altogether lacking in the carefully thought out teamwork of these gifted virtuosi. Then again, perfection of ensemble is not to be gainsaid, and perhaps there are those listeners for whom it is enough. That, and the sumptuous sound characteristic of Capitol's recent releases.

—J.L.

**SCHUBERT:** *Symphony No. 7 (9) in C ("The Great")*; Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonel Perlea. Vox PL-10200, \$4.98.

▲LOVERS of this monumental work are split right down the middle as to how it should be performed. Some prefer Furtwängler, with his slow tempi, lush sonorities, and his lingering, poetic style of phrasing. Others, in the Toscanini camp, believe this symphony to be a masculine and heroic document, majestic in its sweep. Perlea seems to have combined the best elements of both concepts, and he gives us a performance that is worthy of considerable notice. His tempi are anything but slow (except in the introduction); in fact, the final movement lacks a

firm beat at times, due to the rapid pace. But his phrasing is beautifully molded, and he seems to impart an exuberance to his orchestra which gives the music a vigor not always encountered in performances of this work. One could wish, however, that the orchestra were larger, as Perlea seems to strive for masses of sound which place a strain on his enthusiastic musicians. All in all, there is a healthiness to this reading which, despite the foregoing reservations, make it hard to resist. The recording is clear and brilliant, although the wood-winds seem a bit too prominent.

—D.H.M.

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**SIBELIUS:** *Symphony No. 1 in E minor, Op. 39*; Philharmonia Orchestra under Paul Kletzki. Angel 35313, \$4.98 or \$3.48.

▲ALTHOUGH composed in 1899, the first of the Finnish master's symphonies still bears the mark of invention. The orchestration, even by today's standards, is brilliantly conceived. Conducting students will discover more than one challenge in its contrapuntal pages. Kletzki's is a virile, finely molded performance of great sensitivity. Examination of the score confirmed the ear's impression that the second movement is expounded too rapidly. The clearly marked *Andante* (54 to the half note) is taken at the later *accelerando* with no perceptible change between the two. The third and last movements are again spoken with eloquence, as was the first. Although written with a *decrescendo*, the final bars are played rather tentatively and come as an anti-climax. A muffled and over-resonant quality seems to have crept into the ordinarily fine brass and percussion sound of this brilliant orchestra. —A.K.

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**R. STRAUSS:** *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme—Orchestral Suite, Op. 60*; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. Decca DL-9903, \$3.98.

▲AN impressive performance that captures with taste and winning subtlety the humor and pseudo-pomp of Molière's comedy of manners. Particularly convincing is the delightful minuet depicting the dancing master's lesson, and also the Entrance and Dance of the Tailors. The brilliant writing of the stately minuet of Lully, and the Dinner Scene with its quotes from *Don Quixote* and imitations of twittering lambs, are most tellingly interpreted. The Berliners are ever a joy to hear. The sound is rather indistinct. Decca would have been wise to have followed Victor's example of containing this suite on one LP side. —A.K.

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**R. STRAUSS:** *Ein Heldenleben*; Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Willem Mengelberg. RCA Camden CAL-337, \$1.98.

▲VICTOR is to be thanked most sincerely for this reissue. Collectors who have treasured M-44 these thirty years may now, at last, replace it with an LP facsimile. In fact, the facsimile has much better sound than did the shellacs, though the vintage involved rules out hi-fi altogether. Even an approximation of the original performance, however, is enough to demonstrate that it was, as remembered, better than most of the later ones to be had at higher prices. The orchestra plays with a sonority and a discipline that are rarely encountered, and that applies to the competitive versions of *Ein Heldenleben* too.

—J.L.

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**R. STRAUSS:** *Sinfonia Domestica, Op. 53*; Saxon State Orchestra of Dresden conducted by Franz Konwitschny. Decca DL-9904, \$3.98.

▲ALTHOUGH this work is rather unwieldy, the unimportant position in the repertoire to which it heretofore has been relegated is hardly deserved. The current revival of interest, not only on records but also in the concert hall, is really gratifying. Here the voluptuous musical narrative of family life is given a performance of sumptuous texture and impressively grand design, equal to (though not better than) that of the late Clemens Krauss. The Saxonians play with a lush tone and admirable spirit. The sound, which is generally quite good, tends at times to be a bit resonant. —A.K.

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**STRAVINSKY:** *L'Histoire du soldat*; Ars Nova conducted by Robert Mandell. Westminster W-LAB 7049, \$7.50.

▲WHY so much for so little music? The answer is that there is more on this disc than you might think. This is not exactly the suite, which lasts something over twenty minutes. Rather, it is almost the complete score as originally composed for the stage. It includes, that is to say, the four short musical sections omitted from the generally heard version, or about eight more minutes over-all. What it does not include, fortunately or not depending on your attitude in these matters, is the narration and the dialogue. So that it is a kind of super-suite, neither fish nor fowl, incomplete as indicated but with every note of music as written. The performance is good, the sound better than that.

—J.N.

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**STRAVINSKY:** *L'Histoire du Soldat* (complete); Robert Helpmann (The Devil), Terence Longdon (The Soldier), Anthony Nichols (The Narrator), Chamber Orchestra conducted by John Pritchard. Victor LM-2079, \$3.98.

▲HERE "The Soldier's Tale" is heard in its complete form, with an English translation from the original of C. F. Ramuz by Michael Flanders and Kitty Black.

This version was used at the Edinburgh International Festival, where this performance was recorded a few years ago. The seven instrumentalists give an idiomatic reading of the instrumental portion. Unfortunately, the speakers, and Anthony Nichols in particular, betray their English origin all too clearly. The accents become annoying after the first few minutes, and as a result we have a very British affair, not a bitter, universal story. This was also one of the flaws in the Vox recording that appeared some time ago. Perhaps the solution is playing the work complete but without the voices, as Westminster did in its current issue. Here we had the musical score complete and satisfactorily done. An earlier version with the original French text has been withdrawn and is no longer available. However, unless the visual element is present the spoken text tends to detract from the pleasure to be derived from the score.

The present recording, as such, is realistic, with excellent balance between the voices and the instrumentalists. The purely instrumental portions are brilliantly played, and make one wish that the entire performance were as effective. —R.R.

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**SURINACH:** *Sinfonietta Flamenca*; **TU-RINA:** *Sinfonia Sevillana*; Philharmonia Orchestra of Hamburg conducted by Arthur Winograd. M-G-M E-3435, \$3.98.

▲THE *Sinfonietta*, the annotator tells us, "draws mainly upon Flamenco gypsy and Moorish elements of musical folklore." It was written under a commission from the Louisville Orchestra. Surinach is an ingenious composer who at present is making the most of "cashing in" on the melodic richness of his native folk. Here, he has created a colorful and atmospheric work of considerable merit. Turina's descriptive *Sinfonia Sevillana* has been called subtly inflected art and that it is, for at first it seems to hide its profiles like veiled characters. Both of these scores abound in nuances to which a conductor like Argenta would be more receptive. This is proved by comparing Winograd's performance of the Turina work with that by Argenta (London International 91013). The effect of the comparison suggests to your reporter that such would also be the case in regard to Surinach's work, which Winograd performs in a rather forthright manner. Excellent sound in both works. —P.H.R.

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**SURINACH:** *Madrid 1890*; M-G-M Chamber Orchestra conducted by the composer; *Three Spanish Songs and Dances*; William Masselos (piano); *Danza Andaluza*; *Hollywood Carnival*; same orchestra conducted by the composer; *Tales of the Flamenco Kingdom*; Marga Richter (piano); *Ritmo Jondo—Flamenco*; M-G-M Chamber Orchestra conducted by Izler Solomon. M-G-M E-3419, \$3.98.

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▲**SURINACH** is a singularly facile composer with a natural flair for diversion. That he utilizes his native folk rhythms and even folk melodies is not surprising since practically no Spanish-born composer of any consequence has been able to elude their fascination. One suspects they are in the blood which, as we all know, nurtures the brain as well as energizes the emotions. This potpourri of Surinach's compositions sustains interest surprisingly well for a one-man show with a pro-patria flavor. *Madrid 1890*, as well as *Hollywood Carnival*, reveals Surinach as an ingenious musical caricaturist. The first, a take-off on early cafe and dance hall music, is truly delightful "tongue-in-cheek" musical satire. The second aims similarly to burlesque Hollywood. *Ritmo Jondo* (previously recorded in its extended ballet version on M-G-M disc E-3268) is heard here in its original chamber form, which owns the stronger profile. Separating these works are the *Three Songs and Dances* for piano, well played by Masselos, three fanciful pieces for piano students or children, expressively performed by Miss Richter, and the Surinach version of an Andalusian dance. Since the composer knows his way around the orchestra, he obtains some effective colors. The reproduction does justice to them. —P.H.R.

**VAUGHAN WILLIAMS:** *Symphony No. 4 in F minor*; Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. Columbia ML-5158, \$3.98.

▲**MITROPOULOS** has made a specialty of this marvelous work, and we are in Columbia's debt for making his electric performance available to those who do not frequent Carnegie Hall. Owners of the London limited edition set (which does not include No. 8) already have been confronted by one duplication problem in the powerful Stokowski version of No. 6. The earlier, angrier *F minor* is equally atypical of the series, and as before I find Boult's conception inadequate to its sweep and intensity. These are qualities that mark any Mitropoulos reading, and they are especially appropriate to this surcharged music. The Philharmonic boys give their all, as do the engineers. An outstanding issue. —J.L.

**VERDI:** *Il Trovatore*; Maria Meneghini Callas (Leonora); Fedora Barbieri (Azucena); Luisa Villa (Ines); Giuseppe di Stefano (Manrico); Renato Ercolani (Ruiz); Rolando Panerai (Conte di Luna); Nicola Zaccaria (Ferrando); Giulia Mauri (Old Gypsy); La Scala Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. Angel set 3554-5, 5 sides, \$13.45.

▲**THE** Metropolitan Opera's three First Ladies now have each a recording of *Trovatore*. Callas, I find, benefits by the presence of a first-rate conductor at the

podium, and mechanically her set is excellent, at the very least as good as its best rivals. And the prima donna is in her very best form; her tone is very often quite lovely in its own distinctive way and she brings real eloquence to her delivery of the arias and ensembles. Like Tebaldi in the London set she includes the rarely heard cabaletta following *Miserere*, and in all justice she brings it off far more successfully than her estimable rival. Perhaps nowhere does her voice sound better than in the little duet between Manrico's *Ah si, ben mio* and *Di quella pira*. In a word, Miss Callas gives a performance good enough to stand all comparisons. She is better suited to this music than Tebaldi, and it is no discredit to her that she does not match the ravishing tones of Milanov at her best—and Milanov is at her best in Victor's *Trovatore*.

Di Stefano does some good singing in the set, but he is guilty of some messy attacks and some sliding tones, nor is his voice perfectly even. He is almost defeated by *Di quella pira*—he manages all right, but one feels he gives about all he has. Panerai does some of the best work I have heard from him as the Count, and Zaccaria is an excellent Ferrando if hardly so gifted vocally as London's Tozzi. Both he and di Stefano deserve a word of credit for recognizing the existence of those eight-note figures that occur in *Abbiella zingara* and in *Di quella pira*; though they may not articulate them all. Barbieri, who also sings Azucena in the Victor set, is less good here. The voice has a pronounced flutter, and her pitch is quite uncertain in *Stride la vampa*. She improves as the show goes on, however, and sings *Ai nostri monti* quite beautifully. There are good stage effects in the set—Manrico's serenade in the first act and his part in the *Miserere*, and not least the chorus of nuns.

To sum up, if I prefer the Victor set, it is because of Milanov and Bjoerling. But both Callas and Karajan contribute more than a mite of value to this one.

—P.L.M.

**WAGNER:** *Goetterdaemmerung*; Kirsten Flagstad (Bruennhilde); Ingrid Bjoner (Gutrune; Third Norn); Eva Gustavsson (Waltraute; First Norn); Karen Marie Flagstad (Second Norn; Wellgunde); Unni Hugge-Hanssen (Woglinde); Beate Asserson (Flosshilde); Set Svanholm (Siegfried); Waldemar Johnsen (Gunther); Per Groeneberg (Alberich); Egil Nordisjo (Hagen); Opera Chorus; Oslo Philharmonic and Norwegian State Radio Orchestras conducted by Oivin Fjeldstad. London set XLLA-48, 6 discs, \$29.88.

▲**IN** January of 1956 the Norwegian State Radio attracted considerable attention by presenting *Goetterdaemmerung* with Flagstad, emerging from retirement, as Bruennhilde. The work was presented in

three installments, but was not complete. When, therefore, in response to the international interest created by the event, London Records decided to make it available in disc form, it was necessary to add some missing scenes and, where it could be done without destroying the impression of spontaneity, to touch up the tapes and correct occasional errors. The results are highly creditable to the editors and engineers.

Naturally the spotlight is on the great star. Even considering that she did not have to go through the entire role in one session, Flagstad's performance is a *tour de force*. Her voice retains an amazing portion of its old tonal beauty, though she has some difficulty with the notes above the staff. What is more saddening is that the sounds no longer pour out with the perfect ease that used to be characteristic. In the first scene with Siegfried, for example, we get little impression of the essential *joie de vivre*. It is all a valiant effort, but it is an effort.

Svanholm as Siegfried is possibly a bit stiffer than he was in his Metropolitan days, but he remains one of the better Wagner tenors, and he knows the style and traditions. But the rest of the cast is on the weak side. Johnsen's Gunther is quite overwhelmed by his assignment and manages to give only a sketch of the part. Nordisjo's Hagen is altogether too much of a gentleman. Neither Bjoner as Gutrune nor Gustavson as Waltraute creates much of a character. It is amusing to note a family resemblance to the voice of the star in that of Karen Marie Flagstad, who plays a Norn and a Rhine-maiden.

Aside from its souvenir value the set is the first complete *Goetterdaemmerung*, but alas! it will hardly be the definitive one.

—P.L.M.

**WAGNER:** *Prelude and Good Friday Spell from "Parsifal"; A Siegfried Idyll; Prelude to "Die Meistersinger"*; Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. Capitol P-8368, \$3.98.

▲**ONE** can feel nothing but admiration for Steinberg at the fine qualities of tonal timbre, discipline and elegance of execution that this orchestra has developed since he took command. Less admirable, however, is his conception of the *Siegfried Idyll*. Performed at a runaway pace, it sounds like Wagner with St. Vitus dance; surely this is the fastest reading on micro-groove. (One would find a Steinberg-Rodzinski discussion of views on this piece most enlightening for, if memory serves correctly, the latter's tempi are as plodding as the former's are frantic.) The *Meistersinger* Prelude is given a finely paced and vital exposition. Oddly, the trumpets seem overprominent here and out of balance in *tutti* passages. The two

familiar *Parsifal* excerpts are convincingly played, with a deep coloration but without the *Schmaltz* we have had from other sources. Fine, clear sound. —A.K.

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**WAGNER:** *Orchestral Highlights from The Ring* (*The Valkyrie—Ride of the Valkyries* and *Wotan's Farewell and Magic Fire Spell*; *Siegfried—Forest Murmurs*; *The Twilight of the Gods—Daybreak and Siegfried's Rhine Journey*; *Siegfried's Funeral Music* and *Brunnhilde's Immolation*; Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. Epic LC-3321, \$3.98.

▲WHAT a superb disciplinarian Szell is, and what a fine orchestra he has in Cleveland! This concert of familiar orchestral selections from *The Ring* is realistically recorded (you might, if you are particularly imaginative, believe the Rhine was flowing just back of your loudspeaker arrangement in the *Rhine Journey* and again in the *Immolation* music). Szell again proves himself to be one of the most persuasive of Wagnerian disciples with this fine music-making.

—P.H.R.

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**WAGNER:** *Die Meistersinger—Prelude; Trial Song; Flieder Monolog; Wahn Monolog; Quintet; Wach auf; Prize Song; Final Address*; Annelies Kupper (Eva); Herta Toepper (Magdalene); Wolfgang Windgassen (Walter); Josef Herrmann (Hans Sachs); Richard Holm (David); Munich Philharmonic Orchestra and Wuerttemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. Decca DL-9895, \$3.98.

**WAGNER:** *Tristan und Isolde—Prelude; Isolde's Narrative; Brangaene's Warning; Marke's Monolog; Tristan's Death; Liebestod*; Astrid Varnay (Isolde); Margarete Klose and Herta Toepper (Brangaene); Wolfgang Windgassen (Tristan); Kim Borg (King Marke); Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother; Wuerttemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. Decca DL-9897, \$3.98.

**WEBER:** *Der Freischütz—Overture; Nein, laenger traeg' ich nicht die Qualen; Hier im ird'scher Jammerthal; Schweig, damit dich niemand warnt; Kommt ein schlanker Bursch' gegangen; Wie nahte mir die Schlummer; Entr'acte; Und ob die Wolke sie verhuelle; Einst traeumte meine sel'gen Base; Huntsmen's Chorus; Anny Schlemme (Agathe); Rita Streich (Annchen); Wolfgang Windgassen (Max); Hermann Uhde (Kaspar); Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann; Munich Philharmonic Orchestra and RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arthur Rother; Bamberg Symphony Orchestra and Wuerttemberg State Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. Decca DL-9896, \$3.98.*

▲AS a glance at the above listing will show, these are miscellaneous collections

of highlights, not unified performances, though they hang together well enough. The singing in the *Meistersinger* program is hardly outstanding: Windgassen gets off to a rather uncertain start, and Herrmann is not the warmest Hans Sachs we have known. But the *Quintet* is more transparent than it often is—you can actually hear Magdalene and David. The *Tristan* selections fare better. I do not remember hearing more satisfactory work from Varnay on records, and certainly Klose gives one of the best *Warnings* to date. Borg is a properly dignified Marke. But why no love duet, and why a voiceless *Liebestod*? Windgassen shows best in the *Freischütz*, singing his big aria freely if not altogether tidily. Uhde, for his part, could hardly be better. Perhaps his *Drinking Song* is a bit rushed—certainly the few lines of spoken text between stanzas seem so—but his singing is superb. Schlemme sings her two big arias beautifully, and Streich exhibits a welcome humor as Annchen. —P.L.M.

## The Art of Harold Bauer, Volume 2—

**SCHUMANN:** *Novelle in D, Op. 21, No. 2; In The Night (Fantasiestuecke, Op. 12)*; **GRIEG:** *Albumblatt, in A Op. 28, No. 3; Berceuse, Op. 38, No. 1; An dem Fruehling, Op. 43, No. 6*;

**DURAND:** *Waltz in E flat*; **BRAHMS:** *Capriccio in B minor, Op. 76, No. 2*;

**GLUCK/SAINTE-SAENS:** *Caprice (on Airs de Ballet from "Alceste")*; **BACH:** *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desire*; **SCHUBERT:** *Impromptu in A flat, Op. 90, No. 4*;

**DEBUSSY:** *Clair de Lune*; **CHOPIN:** *Fantaisie Impromptu, Op. 66*; **RUBINSTEIN:** *Kamennoi-Ostrow, Op. 10, No. 22*; Harold Bauer (piano). RCA Camden CAL-348, \$1.98.

▲ALL of these re-pressings are of such ancient vintage that, even with modern transfer techniques, the sound ranges from poor to impossible. Often the bass line becomes a monotonous rumble (Brahms), the treble a squeaking whisper (Rubinstein). Some impressions are formed, nevertheless. Whatever one may have thought of him as an editor of other people's music (the ghastly wreck of Mussorgsky's *Pictures At An Exhibition*, Schirmer edition) one must concede that Bauer was a formidable stylist and a superb technician. The latter quality he distinctly displays in the Schubert *Impromptu* marked *allegretto* but here played *prestissimo*. The Chopin and Debussy are done with fine feeling and good stylistic taste. Perhaps it's best that the sonics are poorest in the Rubinstein.

—A.K.

## KEYBOARD

**A Bruce Prince-Joseph Organ Recital at Columbia University: 19th Psalm (Marcello); Ave Maria (Bach-Gounod); Andante (Mozart); Concerto in C, in One Movement (Duke Johann Ernst); Donkey Dance (Elmore); Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H (Liszt); Benedictus (Reger); The Squirrel (Weaver); Toccata (Prince-Joseph); Bruce Prince-Joseph (organ).** HI-FI Record R-709, \$4.98.

▲THIS is intended as a demonstration disc rather than a collection of great organ music. As such it is a stunning example of recording technique at its best. The organ, located at Saint Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, is a large and richly textured Skinner. A considerable variety of combinations is displayed here, from steam calliope effects in the Mozart to large masses of string tone in the Prince-Joseph. This variety is interesting although not always in the best of taste. No matter: Prince-Joseph is a capable enough young man who seems to know how to get the effects he wants. The music is not without merit either. It ranges from Baroque styles (Marcello, Ernst) through Romantic (Liszt, Reger) to more or less modern (Weaver, Elmore). The Liszt is the longest selection and quite excitingly performed. Weaver's *The Squirrel* is really quite cute and it is played with imagination. The notes on the record jacket proudly proclaim that all sounds are included, even "slight wind sounds, and noises from the organ mechanism". Frankly, we can do without such realisms! The sound on the whole is very good, however, and the disc is really a pleasant experience. —D.H.M.

**English Keyboard Music: O Ye Happy Dames (Anon.); When Griping Griefs (Edwards); Tres Partes in Una (Monday); Christe Qui Lux With A Meane; Christe Qui Lux; Eterne Rex Altissime (Redford); Gloria Tibi Trinitas III and IIII (Blitheman); Pavan; A Fansye (Newman); Ex More Docti Mistico; O Ye Tender Babes; Natus Est Nobis (Tallis); Galliard (Anon.); The Perpetual Round (Tomkins); In Nomine (Bull); Ut Re My Fa Sol La (Byrd); Fortune My Foe (Tomkins); Paul Wolfe (harpsichord). Expériences Anonymes EA-0013, \$4.98.**

▲THIS type of music has really lost its appeal to the general music-loving public. In some ways this is regrettable, for it does have a certain charm all its own. But there is a considerable sameness in texture, style, and technique which probably makes it lack sufficient expressive qualities to maintain interest. At the hands of a remarkable artist, however, this music can come to life. Wolfe, though a capable and, I think, a dedicated young man, is not so overwhelming a musician that he can breathe the breath of life into these pieces. This is not to say that he will not be able to do so in the future; certainly he displays talent and affinity

for his instrument. This harpsichord is hampered by the same lack of variety as is the music, however, and his performances here, at least, are quite straight-laced. The music, taken from the Mulliner and Tomkin Books, dates from the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The seventeenth-century selections are, I think, more interesting. Bull's *In Nomine* will probably be most readily acceptable to the average listener. The recording is excellent. —D.H.M.

## VOICE

### Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Album:

*Gretchen am Spinnrade; Die junge Nonne; Ah die Musik; Der Musensohn* (Schubert); *Volksliedchen; Widmung* (Schumann); with Phyllis Spurr (piano); *Rodelinda—Art thou troubled?* (Handel); *Orfeo ed Euridice—What is life?* (Gluck); *Serse—Ombra mai fu* (Handel); with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent; *Elijah—O rest in the Lord* (Mendelssohn); Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) with the Boyd Neel Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. London LL-1529, \$3.98.

▲HERE is a re-shuffling of long familiar material. The lieder side of the disc, formerly issued on two ten-inch sides, is vocally lovely but rather tame. The exception is the admirable performance of *An die Musik*. *Widmung* is sung too elaborately for my taste, with too strong contrasts. The singer introduces a curious appoggiatura in this song. The first two numbers on side 2 are sung in English, though the originals are Italian. *Art thou troubled?*, however, is no translation of *Dove sei*, but a quite different idea adapted to the music. It is nicely sung but not too cleanly reproduced. The same may be said of the famous *Orfeo* air, which has a most unfortunate translation. *O rest in the Lord* is the best of the lot, a fine, idiomatic, restrained performance, and better in reproduction than any of the others. *Ombra mai fu*—the so-called *Largo*—is almost as good, but the climax is not quite as successful as the beautifully quiet start. —P.L.M.

### Great Artists at Their Best, Vol. 3:

*Aida—O patria mia* (Verdi); Rose Bampton (soprano); *Traviata—Ah, fors' e lui; Sempre libera* (Verdi); Lucrezia Bori (soprano); *Faust—Salut, demeure* (Gounod); Richard Crooks (tenor); *Don Carlo—O Carlo, ascolta* (Verdi); Giuseppe di Luca (baritone); *Héroïdade—Il est doux, il est bon* (Massenet); Maria Jeritza (soprano); *Die Zauberflöte—Der Höhle Rache* (Mozart); Miliza Korjus (soprano); *Pagliacci—No, Pagliacci non son* (Leoncavallo); Giovanni Martinelli (tenor); *Carmen—Habanera* (Bizet); Gladys Swarthout (mezzo-soprano); *Otello—Credo* (Verdi);

John Charles Thomas (baritone); *Carmen—Toreador Song* (Bizet); Lawrence Tibbett (baritone). Camden CAL-346, \$1.98.

▲OF course one should not take a catch-phrase title too seriously, but there is a temptation in this case to interpret "at their best" as referring to the job of dubbing from the old originals. With the one serious reservation concerning incorrect pitches, these recordings are successful, though in several cases the artists made other recordings that show them to better advantage. Crooks, for example, aside from being about a half-tone low here, has done more successful things; Jeritza is hardly at her most characteristic. On the other hand, Bampton is in top form and Bori provides a souvenir of one of her memorable roles. De Luca is excellent in his aria (though again the pitch is high); Korjus gives one of the better Queen of the Night performances; and Martinelli is beyond question at his finest. Thomas and Tibbett are both above the proper keys. —P.L.M.

### ELISABETH SCHWARZKOPF in Songs You Love with Gerald Moore at the piano:

*Drink to me only with thine eyes; Plaisir d'amour* (Martini); *On wings of song* (Mendelssohn); *Songs my mother taught me* (Dvorak); *Si mes vers avaient des ailes* (Hahn); *None but the lonely heart* (Tchaikovsky); *Murmelndes Luefchen* (Jensen); *Ich liebe Dich* and *Farmyard Song* (Grieg); *Schilf, Schilf, saeuse and Schwarze Rosen* (Sibelius); *Wiegenlied* (Strauss); *In dem Schatten meiner Locken* and *Elfenlied* (Wolf); *O du liebs Angeli* and *Gsaetzi* (Swiss Folk Songs). Angel 35383, \$4.98 or \$3.48.

▲NOT surprisingly, Schwarzkopf sings like an angel in some of these ever familiar songs. The beauty of her voice and the perfection of her artistry are rare attributes. But angelic singing has its drawbacks—one asks for more feeling than we have here in songs like the Tchaikovsky, the Dvorak, the second of Sibelius and the first of Wolf. The ease, the poise and the tonal beauty of the soprano are thrice praiseworthy but the style none the less lacks the variety that is needed to sustain a listener's undivided interest. Moore is his own intimitable self at the keyboard, and the recording is happily realistic. Schwarzkopf's vocal art in these songs certainly should be heard by all amateurs or students essaying any or all of them. —P.H.R.

### Gala Performance with Members of the Metropolitan Opera Association:

*Arias and duets from standard operas;* James Pease (baritone); Valeria Ruggeri (soprano); Albert Da Costa (tenor); Frank Valentino (baritone); Mary Henderson (soprano); Lois Hunt (soprano); Sandra Warfield (contralto); James McCracken (tenor); Brenda

Lewis (soprano); Louis Sgarro (bass); Rudolph Schock (tenor); Barbara Troxell (soprano); an unidentified symphony orchestra conducted by Hans Jurgen-Walther. Concord 3003, \$3.98.

▲THE facts are somewhat stretched in the title of this program—not all of the singers are or have ever been members of the Metropolitan Opera. The performances are composites, the singing having been recorded in this country, while the orchestral accompaniments are European. Small wonder they are not models of precision. The vocalism ranges from the admirably professional work of Barbara Troxell and James Pease to a pretty shabby attempt at the *Samson and Delilah* duet. —P.L.M.

●  
**Russian Folk Songs:** *Blonde braids* (arr. Alexei Koposov); *Farewell to happiness; Story of the coachman; Song of the Volga boatmen; Along the Peterskaya Road; The Village on the Road; Danube, my Danube; In the valley; The barge-haulers* (arr. Rachmaninov); Ivan Skobtsov (basso) with the Russian State Orchestra conducted by Dmitri Ospov and Alexei Semenov. Monitor MC-2001, \$4.98.

▲SKOBTSOV is another Russian basso with a suggestion of Chaliapin in his voice; he sings to the accompaniment mostly of a balalaika orchestra in the style we came long ago to associate with that other great singer. Which is to say, the program is very virile and very hearty. For the most part the songs were new to me, several of them telling long, sad, folksy tales of Russian life. Some may seem a trifle repetitious when one does not understand the language, but there is every evidence that they are delivered with great conviction. —P.L.M.

## MISCELLANY

**Nocturne:** Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Carmen Dragon. Capitol P-8363, \$3.98.

▲ANOTHER one of those catch-alls, elegantly played and sumptuously recorded. The contents: *Nocturne* from Grieg's *Lyric Suite, Op. 54*, *Elégie* from Massenet's *Les Erinnyes*, *Poème* by Fibich (a piece otherwise known as *Moonlight Madonna*), the *Prayer* from Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, *Trauemerei* from Schumann's *Kinderseiten*, *Meditation* from Massenet's *Thaïs*, Schubert's *Serenade*, Debussy's *Reverie*, *Evening Star* from Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, and the *Cradle Song* of Brahms. All the arrangements are effective in terms of the omnibus title. If this "music to fall asleep by" really fulfilled its mission, however, who would shut off the phonograph? —J.N.

# "Unlikely Corners"

*WHY NOT LOOK below the surface occasionally and find out what it is in the direct appeal of the popular tune which makes the audience go home whistling; to see if there is not some artistic impulse hidden in unlikely corners...*

—Ralph Vaughan Williams

▲SOME of our most vital, most enduring music has originated in the "unlikely corners"—Tin Pan Alley, the Brill Building, Broadway, Hollywood—centers unashamedly dedicated to the hard principles of commerce and entertainment, places where art is a secondary, even perhaps tertiary, consideration. There is a commendable honesty in this. And, too, there is no necessity to apologize for the best of the Broadway musicals, and once in a while Hollywood manages to reach the level of art in filmstudies like *An American in Paris*, *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, and *Funny Face*. American popular songs, at their best, serve in the dual function of quasi-folk song and art song. Our short cultural history, and the shape it has taken, is dependent upon imported traditions and art which then becomes transformed by and for American tastes. Of course, much of our popular culture and popular music is dismal, and so far as the latter is concerned it will be ignored here; the good that may be said can more readily be said about "unpopular" popular songs, rather than the "smash hit" which so often makes the hearing faculty an affliction.

The lyric theater has most consistently furnished music of quality, especially since the 'Twenties, currently exemplified in the flourishing peak of *My Fair Lady*. Television has made feeble attempts to invade the field, but without much success to date. Recent releases make a neat bundle from the two competing thoroughfares, making available the scores of Kurt Weill's first American musical, Leonard Bernstein's most recent, and Rodgers and Hammerstein's first for television.

Weill's *Johnny Johnson* (M-G-M E-3447) with a book by Paul Green, was produced by the Group Theater in 1936, but did not last long; last year's revival suffered similarly. Whatever the reasons for the show's failure, Weill's contribution was a worthy and important one. The score is without song-hit material (though one, *Johnny's Song*, was re-set to a new lyric and, as *To Love You And To Lose You*, enjoyed some popularity). The anti-war theme of *Johnny Johnson* did not make for an evening of light entertainment, but happily M-G-M has recorded practically all of Weill's powerful score, thus preserving this historic musical which, incidentally, was prepared under the supervision of Weill's widow, Lotte Lenya, and is performed by a hand-picked cast of singer-actors. Burgess Meredith sings the title role affectingly, and there are other fine contributions by Lenya, Bob Shaver, Hiram Sherman, and Scott Merrill. Under the direction of Weill specialist Samuel Matlowsky the score (orchestrated by Weill himself) is given a definitive performance.

Leonard Bernstein, music's TV spokesman, furnished the major asset of a musical version of *Candide* (Columbia OL-5180), the best score of the season's crop of musicals. Like *Johnny Johnson*, this musical does not have a pretty story or a popular point of view. Green's attitude toward war was hauntingly bitter and truthful, while Voltaire's misanthropy is cynical, vitriolic, even hateful (though also close to the truth). These attributes are preserved in Bernstein's musical almost too faithfully by Lillian Hellman in her book; its satire was cruel and the laughter hollow. Bernstein's score is skittish, witty, artfully evoking an 18th-century flavor by way of 20th-century sophistication. Another asset of *Candide* is the

excellent singing by Robert Rounseville and Barbara Cook, and also of Irra Petina in the outstanding "aria", *I Am Easily Assimilated*. The show has already quit the Broadway scene while its less deserving, though more "commercial" running mates continue their inexplicable success—which can only be accounted for in terms of taste, or lack of it.

The story of *Cinderella* was chosen by Rodgers and Hammerstein for their first television venture, for which they wrote nine musical numbers. Nothing unexpected here. Rodgers is probably the American waltz king and the *Cinderella* score contains a goodly number, including a most attractive *Waltz For A Ball*. Another characteristic song is *In My Own Little Corner*, one of the team's best. Possibly the best single word description is "charming," which applies as well to the orchestrations by Robert Russell Bennett. Columbia's original cast album (OL 5190) features Julie Andrews, John Cypher, Edith Adams, and Kaye Ballard, all in fine form. Miss Andrews seems a particularly happy choice for the title role—if the *Cinderella* story required another telling.

The way of a lass with a tune is also variously and pleasingly demonstrated in the suavity of Ella Fitzgerald, the elegance of Portia Nelson, and the traditionalism of Jane Powell in three recent noteworthy releases.

Ella Fitzgerald sings the Rodgers and Hart Song Book (Verve set MGV 4002-2) is a choice collection of thirty-four songs by the two masters. Rodgers' melodies of his Hart days were less sentimental than the products of his later Hammerstein period. Miss Fitzgerald's smooth, seemingly effortless renditions invest the songs with an unequaled musicianly quality, but does not consistently underscore the incisive bite of Hart's lyrics, which have been better served by Lee Wiley and Louise Carlyle. Still, the Fitzgerald collection is altogether an outstanding one, the selection of songs is on the whole very good (though the choice of *Hare You Met Miss Jones?* caused some silly, and unnecessary tampering with the lyric, coming out *Hare You Met Sir Jones?*). This album of two 12" records must be highly recommended, despite minor reservations.

The artistry of Portia Nelson can make even the slightest song sound like a *Lied*. In her latest album, Let Me Love You (New Sound NS-3002), Miss Nelson sings the songs of Bart Howard, one of the better young composers (and a very talented pianist) furnishing so-called "special material," that is, songs especially contrived for supper club *artistes*. Howard has not yet written a musical score, but given the opportunity he should be able to turn out an attractive one. He has a wonderful flair for melody, and this album contains some very lovely tunes. The lyrics, all but one of which are also the work of the composer, suffer somewhat from the atmospheric conditions for which they are fashioned, which is the nether night world of Manhattan's *chic* East Side. But it is Miss Nelson's vibrant voice which makes this album so satisfying an experience. She is given apposite accompaniment by an orchestra composed of such fine musicians as George Ricci, Alan Shulman, and Seymour Barab under the direction of Ralph Burns, who also contributed superb, sensitive, arrangements.

*Can't We Be Friends?* (Verve MGV-2023) brings us Jane Powell, sometime of the cinema, in

a potpourri of songs mainly from the stage and screen, to coin a phrase. Miss Powell's singing is true and clean and, praise be, not tricked out with vocal gimmicks. She has command of range and expression, besides the intelligence to give a lyric its just due. Unlike the Fitzgerald and Nelson albums, the Powell record is not devoted to a single composer. Let this discourage the curiosity of anyone who may feel this is just another medley, let it be said that the songs are very well chosen: Harold Arlen's *For Every Man There's A Woman* and *Hoagy For Love*; Burke and Van Heusen's *Imagination* (beautifully sung); Hugh Martin and Ralph Blane are represented by the wistful *Ev'ry Time*, one of the better ballads; *Comes Love* from the 1939 musical *Yodel Boy* is good rhythm number. Irving Berlin's best song (in one man's opinion), *Let's Face The Music*, is included, as are Kern's *In Love In Vain*, Ellington's *I Got It Bad*, Cahn and Styne's *The Things We Did Last Summer*, Kay Swift's well wrought *Can't We Be Friends?*, and a couple of old timers, Donaldson and Kahn's *My Baby Just Cares For Me* and Austin and Berger's *How Come You Do Me Like You Do?*. The selection is an indication of Miss Powell's taste (good) and her versatility (admirable). The orchestra, conducted by Buddy Bregman—who also supplied the arrangements—tends sometimes to overwhelm with brass, but generally furnishes good accompaniment.

Paul Whiteman's Fiftieth Anniversary is given due consideration in Grand Award's two-record set (Grand Award 33-901), which brings together several of the old Whiteman gang: the Dorseys, Jack Teagarden, Johnny Mercer, Joe Venuti, Hoagy Carmichael, and the Rhythm Boys (Bing, Harry Barris, Al Rinker). Excepting the dubbing of a broadcast marking the reunion of the latter trio, the entire collection is composed of newly made recordings of many Whiteman standards decked out in new arrangements by Lew Davies. The late Tommy Dorsey is heard in what no doubt were some of his last recordings in beautifully controlled solos in *My Romance* and *The Night Is Young*. Jack Teagarden practically steals the show in uninhibited renditions of *Lazy River*, *Basin Street Blues*, and *Jeevers Creepers* (with J. Mercer). Purely orchestral selections include *When Day Is Done*, *Limehouse Blues*, *Ramona*, *It Happened in Monterey*, and an uncut version of the *Rhapsody in Blue*, which is purported to be performed exactly as it was originally at Aeolian Hall in 1924. Whether or not this comes off might be argued, but Buddy Wead at the piano gives a good accounting of the work, and certainly this *Rhapsody* sounds different from the myriad versions now available.

Whiteman's impact upon the American musical scene may be overlooked, or taken for granted by the newer generation. His activities as the misnamed "King of Jazz" had had a lasting influence upon our popular as well as "serious" music since the 'Twenties, when he commissioned works by the more ambitious popular composers. (Besides Gershwin there were Ferde Grofe, Dana Suesse, Richard Rodgers, and Deems Taylor). One might have wished for the inclusion of some of these other efforts in this Whiteman tribute. Possibly RCA-Victor could be persuaded to re-issue on the Camden label some of the old Whiteman Concert Orchestra recordings, viz: Grofe's *Metropolis*, Suesse's *Blue Moonlight*, and other period pieces of *tempo perduto*.

—E.J.

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